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A FREE PAPER FOR KIDS, BY KIDS



IVETTE SALOM

Do you have First Amendment rights at school? Pages 4-5

ISSUE #56 • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016



PHIL ROEDER

Hundreds of students at high schools in Des Moines, IA staged a walkout on Wednesday, November 9 to voice their concerns about the 2016 election outcome and express their support for each other.

On November 8, 2016, the United States elected Donald Trump as its next president. He will become the first president who hasn't served in elected office since Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952. Trump's victory is already being protested across the country.

Trump made a large number of racist, xenophobic and sexist statements during his campaign. Multiple individuals brought up rape charges against him, and in October, audio from a recording in 2005 showed Trump making lewd comments about women that suggested sexual harassment and rape.

Last April, Trump attacked Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, saying, "The only thing [Clinton's] got going is the woman card." Surprisingly, though, the majority of white women voted for Trump in the election.

Trump's plans for his first 100 days in office include allowing the Keystone Pipeline construction to move forward and canceling "every unconstitutional executive action, memorandum and order" President Obama has delivered.

If Trump reversed all of Obama's executive actions, he would also get rid of an immigration program called DACA, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Immigrant youth who fall under the program are better known as Dreamers, and there are an estimated 700,000 of them at risk of being deported.

But Trump's anti-immigration stance is another reason why he ended up with 290 out of 538 electoral college votes. During his campaign, Trump talked about building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico (and having Mexico pay for it), banning Muslims from entering the country and deporting more than 11 million undocumented immigrants.

According to an August Pew Research Center poll, 79 percent of Trump's supporters think the southern border wall should be built. In an interview with NPR, Texas Republican representative Maria Guadalupe Dempsey said, "You build a fence, you put a gate up and you open and close it as you wish. You invite people in. You don't want people who are not invited to come into the country."

In the days immediately following the election, journalists and activists have reported incidents of racist and anti-Muslim harassment. For example, one Afghan woman in Nashville said the neighbor she had grown up with her entire life told her to "go back to where I came from and get the hell out of HER country."

TRUMP COMES TO POWER

PROTESTERS CHANT
"NOT MY PRESIDENT"

By MARIANNE N. NACANAYNAY, age 13



Beginning the day after Election Day, protests against Trump's victory sprung up across the country. Across Los Angeles county, an estimated 4,000 high school students, too young to vote, walked out of school on November 10 in protest; plans for a country-wide student walkout on November 14 are being spread on social media.

"We feel unsafe with our futures," said student Dana Douthwright of West Seattle High School, another school that had an estimated 200 students leave class.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is also protesting by taking steps toward preparing for court against Trump. In a blog post published the day after the election, the ACLU asked Trump to change his positions on his campaign promises. Calling the proposals "unlawful" and "unconstitutional", the organization addressed the president-elect directly and said, "If you do not reverse course and instead endeavor to make these campaign promises a reality, you will have to contend with the full firepower of the ACLU at every step."



Muslim kids protesting Donald Trump in December 2015 in New York City hold up signs to combat Islamophobia. One of Trump's plans for his first 100 days in office is to ban immigration from many Muslim-majority countries associated with terrorism.



Meet... Suhana from Queens, NY

Name: Suhana Syeda

Age: 11

Lives in: Queens, NY

Languages Spoken: Bengali and English

Favorite Food: Pizza

Hobbies: Reading, running, biking and painting

Favorite School Subjects: Reading and robotics

What she wants to be when she grows up: "I don't know yet, but maybe a book critic or a lawyer."

Place She Would Most Like to Visit: Paris

What does she think about the 2016 election and Donald Trump?: "I think

Bernie Sanders would have been the best candidate. I don't know if things would have been better with Hillary Clinton but with Donald Trump, I think he will make life harder for all of us."

Fun Facts About Queens

- Queens, part of New York City, is the only large county in the United States in which the average income of black people is higher than the average income of white people.
- Queens has been home to many important hip-hop artists, including Nicki Minaj, Nas, Run-D.M.C. and A Tribe Called Quest.
- More Chinese Americans live in Queens than in any other county in the United States.
- Queens is home to both of New York City's airports: LaGuardia Airport, and JFK Airport.
- In 1657, the Flushing Remonstrance was passed, which gave more religious freedom to the people of Flushing, Queens, than there was in any other European colony at the time.
- Before its colonization, Queens was part of Lenape territory, along with much of the rest of what is now New York City, New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania.

By INDYKIDS STAFF

270

The number of electoral votes from the Electoral College that a presidential candidate in the United States needs in order to win an election.

nation&world

Town's Destruction Creates First "Climate Refugees" in U.S.

By KAZ NEWMAN,
age 12



Since 1955, rising sea levels and strong storms have destroyed 98 percent of the homes, crops and natural resources of Isle de Jean Charles, a southern Louisiana town. Only about 60 people remain, many of whom are part of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe. Activists have coined those who left America's first "climate refugees," but they are not officially recognized that way.

"We don't call them climate refugees for the reason that they are not covered by the 1951 [Refugee] Convention," explained Marine Franck, a climate change officer at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to Al Jazeera. The protections of that convention are only for people oppressed because of their race, religion or nationality, or because of political opinion.

Earlier this year, the Department

of Housing and Urban Development granted \$48 million to move the Isle de Jean Charles community to a safer area. "We have never done anything at this scale," Marion McFadden, who runs the initiative, told Bloomberg News.

"We see this as setting a precedent for the rest of the country, the rest of the world."

Climate change has forced residents in Kiribati, Bangladesh, Tuvalu and Alaska to relocate as well. "Climate change is no longer some far-off problem," said President



KAREN APRICOT/Flickr

The Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe in the southern Louisiana town of Isle de Jean Charles is being forced to move to a safer area. Ninety-eight percent of homes there have been destroyed by the effects of climate change.

Obama recently. "It is happening here. It is happening now."

In response to the funding for their move, the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe's Chief Albert Paul Naquin told *The Guardian*, "We consider ourselves lucky because we want to put our community together again."

Largest Strike in World History?

By EVANGELINE COMEAU-KIRSCHNER, age 11



One hundred eighty million workers in India went on strike September 2, demanding better protection for all workers in India.

The one-day strike was one of the largest strikes in the history of the world and cost the Indian economy \$2.7 billion. The strike affected electricity, banking and insurance operations across the country and disrupted public transportation.

The biggest trade unions in India led the strike, but their demands would affect the "informal economy" the most. Ninety percent of India's workforce is in the informal economy, which includes bricklayers, housekeepers and food vendors. The minimum wage isn't applied to informal workers, some of whom work "under the table" so their employers don't have to pay taxes. These workers would benefit from the strike's 12

demands, such as a minimum wage for unskilled laborers and protection from unemployment.

The strike was in response to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's economic plans, which strikers say are more focused on attracting foreign companies than on workers' rights. For example, one of Modi's plans would make it easier for companies to fire workers.

Though the strike did not lead to immediate results and was not covered much in Indian and international news sources, supporters hope it will put pressure on the central government to improve labor laws.



Among the 180 million workers who went on strike in India on September 2 were autorickshaw drivers.

Antara Haldar, a professor at the University of Cambridge, told the *Los Angeles Times*, "I am optimistic about the strike bringing the labor issue into the foreground in a way we haven't seen since this government came to power."

Disrupt: To hold up, disturb or throw into disorder

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IndyKids is a free newspaper, website and teaching tool that aims to inform children on current news and world events from a progressive perspective and to inspire in children a passion for social justice and learning. **IndyKids** is funded through donations and grants.

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Just contact **IndyKids**! Adults and kids can write articles, take photos, contribute artwork and help distribute the paper.

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or donate online at www.IndyKids.org



Where in the World?

All the places listed below are mentioned in this issue. Can you match them with their general location on the world map at right? Answers are at the bottom of this page.

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| a) Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana | f) Harlem, NY |
| b) Hawaii | g) The West Bank, Palestine |
| c) India | h) Standing Rock Indian Reservation, North Dakota |
| d) Poland | |
| e) Celaya, Mexico | |



Keeping Native Languages Alive

By RIDA ALI, age 12



Native communities are fighting to keep their languages alive. Linguists predict more than half of the world's indigenous languages will disappear in the next 100 years. Hawaii's native language almost did.

In the 1980s, the United States ended a 90-year ban that prevented the use of Hawaii's native language, *Ōlelo Hawai'i*. At that time, fewer than 50 people under the age of 18 could speak the language, according to research from the state. Now, more than 18,000 people speak it, out of about 142,000 native Hawaiians.

To boost the language and culture of native Hawaiians, more than 20 immersion schools opened across Hawaii. Subjects are taught in Hawaiian until fifth grade, at which point English is introduced.

Some parents have mixed feelings and worry that a delay in learning English could be an obstacle. "A job in Hawaiian language is not guaranteed," Ricky Carvalho, a father, told *Slate*. "So it's better they learn to adapt to English." But many kids want to learn their native language to keep their culture alive. "If I learn it, I could teach it to my kids, and then they could teach it on to



ALEXANDRIA NEASON

Nahulu Carvalho, 12, looks through a handmade Hawaiian language vocabulary book from her kindergarten class. Nahulu attended a Hawaiian immersion charter school until fifth grade.

other kids," said Nahulu Carvalho, a 12-year-old student.

In the United States alone, there are currently 150 Native American languages being spoken, but scholars predict that by 2050, there will only be 20. In 1990, the Native American Languages Act was passed to help keep indigenous languages alive. In 2006, a law was passed to help fund indigenous tribes wanting to start up language programs across the globe.

"No culture has a monopoly on human genius," David Harrison, Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages co-founder, said to BBC. "We lose ancient knowledge if we lose languages."

Is the Electoral College the Best System to Elect Our President?

By MIA CHANG, age 12, and INDYKIDS STAFF



As votes were tallied in the 2016 presidential election, Donald Trump was declared the winner, but he earned fewer votes than Hillary Clinton. How is that possible?

Established in 1787, the Electoral College is how we choose the president and the vice president of the United States. Under the system, a total of 538 electoral votes are spread between all the states, and each state gets a certain number of electoral votes based on its population. For example, California is worth 55 electoral votes; while Delaware is worth three. In most states, whichever candidate gets more popular votes receives all of that state's electoral votes. A presidential candidate needs 270 electoral votes in order to win the election. Donald Trump won 290.

James Madison, one of the founding fathers who supported the Electoral College, thought that the system would give smaller slave-holding states more representation in elections. Historically, states were allowed to count each slave as 3/5ths of a person even though slaves could not vote. Madison and others also felt that citizens may not be informed enough to make a smart decision about candidates, and so electors would



ENRIQUE BALLENZATEGUI ARIBIZA

When people go to the polls to vote for president in the United States, their votes are tallied, but the candidate with the most votes isn't always the one who wins. Instead, the United States used the Electoral College system.

represent their vote.

Sometimes the Electoral College makes people feel like their votes do not count. "If we really subscribe to the notion that 'majority rules,' then why do we deny the majority their chosen candidate?" asked former Michigan governor Jennifer M. Granholm.

Vincy Fon, a professor at George Washington University, wrote that an alternative is to change the Electoral College to give votes to candidates based on the popular vote, instead of a winner-take-all system.

newsbriefs



MANUEL RODRIGUEZ

Taking a Stand Against Homophobia

By PERRY TRAN, age 14

In September, a 12-year-old boy in Celaya, Mexico, stopped an anti-gay protest in its tracks by walking into the middle of the street and standing in front of the 11,000 protesters it attracted. "I have an uncle that is gay, and I don't like people hating him," the boy told a Mexican news outlet.

In the Streets for Abortion Rights

By ELEANOR HEDGES DUROY, age 13

On "Black Monday," October 3, 2016, tens of thousands of women in Poland wore black and participated in a protest against a strict abortion ban. The ban could endanger women's lives by forcing them to carry a pregnancy even when it is a direct



IGA LUBCZANSKA

threat to the woman's life, and making women afraid to seek medical help when they need it. Despite derogatory comments by Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski, the government listened to the women and dropped the proposed bill. Public opinion changed because of the protests. Polls show that 74 percent of Polish people no longer support the ban.

Striking Behind Bars

By YUUKI REAL, age 15

Starting September 9, 2016, thousands of prisoners in over 24 states staged a labor strike demanding better living conditions and healthcare, the right to unionize and an end to what one organizing group call "slavery in America." According to the U.S. Constitution, the only form of legal involuntary



ATTICA FILM / CINDA FIRESTONE

labor is prison labor. Prisons have grown into a \$2 billion industry. The strike was timed to coincide with the 45th anniversary of the 1971 Attica Prison Uprising. Prisoners at the Attica Correctional Facility demanded political rights and better living conditions.

WHY CARE ABOUT THE FIRST AMENDMENT?

Do Kids Have First Amendment Rights at School?

By BARON BAUTISTA, age 9



On December 16, 1965, 13-year-old Mary Beth Tinker and several other students in Des Moines, IA, wore black armbands to school to protest the Vietnam War. They were suspended from school, and the Tinker family received hate mail.

Tinker took her fight against the suspension to the Supreme Court after two lower courts ruled against her. The American Civil Liberties Union represented Tinker in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community Schools* and won. The court ruled that students are persons who deserve First Amendment rights.

"I started having the idea that standing up for what you believe in is really important," Tinker told *The Findlay Courier*. "Yes, it's going to have some risks, but it's worth it."

The ruling has been cited over 9,000 times in other cases. The court's decision created the substantial disruption test, also known as the "Tinker test," which says schools must meet certain guidelines before restricting the right to free speech.

"Young people have always been there to move us forward, away from injustice, away from inequality," Tinker told a group of students in Iowa this May.

Kneeling Down to Stand Up for Black Lives

By LANYIE RHODES, age 10



San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick has been kneeling during the national anthem at NFL games since August. He told NFL Media, "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag and a country that oppresses black people and people of color."

Skyla Madria, 10, agrees with Kaepernick. She knew about the forgotten third verse to "The Star-Spangled Banner," which suggests that African Americans should be in a grave. The fifth-grader feels the Pledge of Allegiance honors a country with an anthem that is racist. That is why she refuses to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance at her school in Pearland, TX.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects freedom of expression. While many people across the country have praised Kaepernick, others have criticized his actions as **unpatriotic**. Still, his First Amendment rights have been honored. However, Madria's principal challenged her rights by requiring her to get her parents' permission in order to protest.

"[A coach] told me you should respect my flag, and respect my nation, and you should stand up for this pledge," said Madria. "He sent me to the principal. The principal called my mother and called me disgusting for not standing up."

Illustration by IVETTE SALOM • Introduction by LILY KUZMINSKI, age 12



The First Amendment is one of the 10 amendments in the Bill of Rights, which opens the U.S. Constitution. The First Amendment gives you the right to speak your mind, regardless of whether the situation is controversial (freedom of speech); the right to submit texts with your desired opinion for publication (freedom of the press); the right to practice any religion that you believe in (freedom of religion); the right to come together and express and defend your ideas (freedom of assembly); and the right to collect signatures to prove your opinion (freedom of petition). What has having First Amendment rights meant for those fighting for social justice, and for young people?

Glossary of Terms

Unpatriotic:

Not showing love and devotion to one's country

Misdemeanor:

A minor crime, usually punished with fines or short prison stays

Repress:

To put down or prevent



In December 1965, 13-year-old Mary Beth Tinker, left, and her brother John wore black armbands to school to protest the Vietnam war and were suspended for weeks. Their court case reached the Supreme Court and paved the way for students to have First Amendment Rights.



Native communities and allies protesting the Dakota Access pipeline at Standing Rock continue to face resistance from police trying to clear the protest. Police have used military equipment and rubber bullets against water protectors.



PAUL ANN EGELOFF

At the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, African-American gold and silver medal runners Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists in a Black Power salute to the U.S. national anthem as a form of protest. From a mural in Brisbane, Australia.

Are Journalists Really Protected Under the First Amendment?

By PERRY TRAN, age 14



An arrest warrant was issued in September for Amy Goodman, a *Democracy Now!* journalist reporting on Dakota Access pipeline protests in North Dakota.

Tens of thousands of Native Americans banded together under 300 tribal nation flags to protest the oil pipeline, claiming it contaminates the local water sources and runs through Native tribes' sacred burial grounds. On September 3, security guards attacked the protesters with dogs and pepper spray. Goodman recorded these attacks.

Goodman was charged with criminal trespass, a **misdemeanor** offense, before the charges were changed to engaging in a riot. The charges were rejected by a judge on October 17.

"The *Democracy Now!* team and I were there to report, to document what was happening on the ground. These charges are simply a threat to all journalists around the country: Do not come to North Dakota," Goodman said in a Facebook video.

Since Goodman's arrest warrant was issued, journalists and citizens have been arguing that this violates the First Amendment, which ensures freedom of the press and freedom of speech.

"This is clearly ... an attempt to **repress** this important political movement by silencing media coverage," Center for Constitutional Rights Legal Director Baher Azmy told *Democracy Now!*

When Books Get Banned

By NICOLE MONTALVO, age 10



How would you feel if you walked into San Francisco Elementary School and didn't find any Harry Potter books? The Harry Potter series was banned there because religious groups disliked its magic and witchcraft.

In 1982, high school students in Long Island, NY, sued the school board for banning 12 books, including *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Laughing Boy*, and won. According to the Supreme Court, "If the party's intention is to deny students access to ideas with which the party disagrees, it is a violation of the First Amendment."

The American Library Association says nine out of 10 books that parents and school boards banned most in 2015 are "by and about people of color, LGBT people and/or disabled people." Some examples include *Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan* and *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out*.

"Without the authentic stories of immigrants, women, LGBT people, Muslims, etc., people will become more entrenched in their view of those groups as the Other," warns Jessica Herthel, co-author of the third most banned book, *I Am Jazz*. "What we need now is more information, more voices and more speech."

Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan



BY JEANNETTE WINTER
A PICTURE BOOK FOR CHILDREN

BEACH LANE BOOKS

Parents in schools in Florida and New York have called for *Nasreen's Secret School* to be banned. The book is about a girl in Afghanistan whose grandmother sends her to a secret school for girls.



Emissions Cuts Up in Smoke?

By ELEANOR HEDGES DUROY, age 13

MIT scientists say that even if all of President Obama's Clean Power Plan is put into place, the United States will not reach its Paris climate accord promise to lower greenhouse gas emissions 28 percent by 2025. America has already used too many fossil fuels due to inexpensive gasoline and natural gas. The emissions cuts are not deep enough. The United Nations recommends that the global temperature not increase more than two degrees in order to prevent the worst global warming effects. Even with the Paris Accord, global temperatures will rise 3.5 degrees Celsius by 2100 if other measures are not put into place. President-elect Donald Trump said he would cancel the promises that were made regarding emissions regulations at the Paris climate talks.



ARCTIC WOLF/Flickr



Brain Size Linked to Length of Yawns

By EVANGELINE COMEAU-KIRSCHNER, age 11

Scientists have confirmed that the bigger your brain is, the longer your yawn lasts. They watched 205 different videos of animals yawning on YouTube and found that humans yawn the longest, for precisely 6.5 seconds. That explains why animals with bigger heads than humans have shorter yawns, because they have smaller brains proportional to their bodies.



Toughie, the Last Frog of His Kind

By MIREYNNA HERNANDEZ, age 10

Toughie, the last Rabbs' fringe-limbed tree frog, passed away at the Atlanta Botanical Garden on September 28, 2016. He was estimated to be 12 years old. Missions led by the Atlanta Botanical Garden and Zoo Atlanta first collected Toughie in 2005. They tried to save frogs like him from chytrid, a deadly fungus in Central Panama. After Toughie died, scientists cryogenically froze him to preserve his body. They hope to use his body for future research.



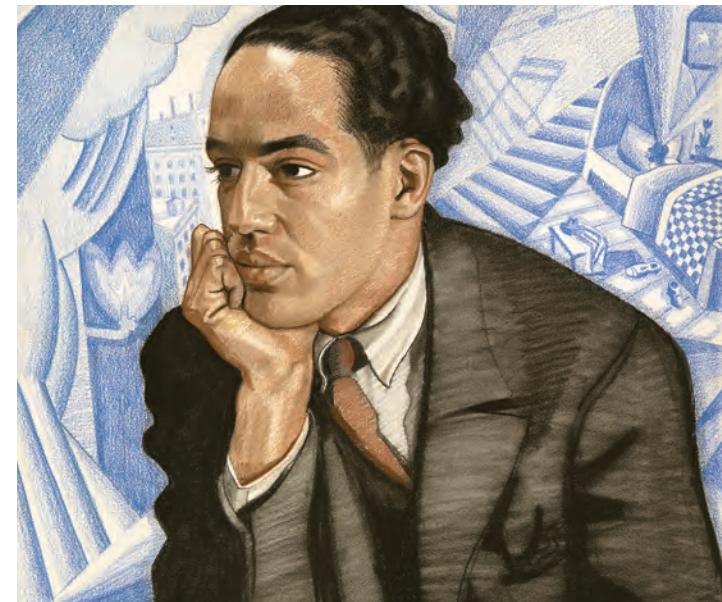
3.5

The number of degrees Celsius that global temperatures will increase by 2100 if no changes other than the ones promised in the Paris Climate Accord are made.

culture&activism

A Dream No Longer Deferred: Saving Langston Hughes's Home

By DYLAN TRAN, age 12



NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Langston Hughes wrote some of the most important works of the **Harlem Renaissance**. A portrait of Hughes by Winold Reiss.

For years, Renée Watson walked by Langston Hughes's home in Harlem, NY, wondering why it was empty. The house on East 127th Street, where the poet, social activist and playwright lived for 20 years, is covered in plants. It looks old and unused. Every time she saw it, she thought, "Someone should do something." Harlem, a historically black community, has gentrified quickly in the last decade. In July 2016, Watson decided to try and save Hughes's home to **preserve** his legacy and what he stood for.

Watson, a Harlem resident, writer and educator, planned to rent Langston Hughes's house to make it an art center that would honor Hughes's writing and his activism on behalf of the black community and push back against **gentrification**. She used Indiegogo, a crowdfunding website, to try and raise \$150,000 to renovate and restore the house. In order to provide support for her efforts, Watson started her own organization, which she called I, Too, Arts Collective.

Speaking to NPR News, Watson said, "I think it's important for the young people who still live in Harlem to know that in their own neighborhood, blocks away from where they're playing basketball...that a literary giant lived there."

According to an update Watson posted to her supporters online on September 1, she was able to raise \$115,250. And as of October 31, she had signed the lease for the property. The space will hold open mics, poetry workshops open to youth, and other literary and community events.

Addressing her supporters, she noted that her "heart is full" and she is "moved by [the] encouragement and enthusiasm."

See page 7 for an interview with Renée Watson.

Harlem Renaissance: The artistic and intellectual movement led by black artists, writers and musicians in Harlem from the end of World War I to the mid-1930s.

Preserve: To care for and look after

Gentrification: The displacement of low-income families, often in communities of color, by richer people and companies due to the rising cost of real estate

Reporting in Danger

By CARA CHANG, age 12



PHOTO COURTESY JANNA JAHAD FACEBOOK PAGE

Janna Jihad Ayyad is a ten-year-old reporter who lives in the West Bank in the occupied **Palestinian** territories. She records videos on her camera and reports on social media about what is happening in her village.

Janna is reporting from one of the most dangerous places in the world. For decades, the Israeli and Palestinian people have been fighting over areas of land occupied by the country of Israel.

Janna started reporting with her mom's iPhone at age seven, when her Palestinian friend was killed by an Israeli soldier in the West Bank. As she got older, she realized that no one was reporting on what was happening in her village.

"I'm living and growing in these circumstances," Janna said in an interview with Al Jazeera in April. "So I must film and report the events like any other news reporter and spread it to the world." A recent video on Facebook features Janna interviewing a sixth-grade girl about daily life in their village.

Critics argue Janna is putting herself in danger and that since she's only ten, she isn't trustworthy. Janna has also been criticized by right-wing bloggers as being a tool for **propaganda**.

Janna says she just wants to give events that take place in her village a global platform.

"The camera is stronger than the gun," Janna explained in her interview with Al Jazeera. "I can send my message to small people, and they can send it to others."

Janna Jihad Ayyad, 10, reports on issues in the West Bank using videos she posts on social media.

Palestine: A territory in the Middle East on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea

Propaganda: Information, often misleading, that is used to promote a particular point of view

Meet IndyKids Teen Reporter, Marisa Hirschfield

By YUUKI REAL, age 15



Yuuki Real: How did you first hear about *IndyKids*, and why did you decide to write for it?

Marisa Hirschfield: I first learned about *IndyKids* from my fourth grade teacher. Because I am interested in social justice and writing, it sounded very interesting and I decided to give it a go. Over the years, *IndyKids* has also helped me at school. While learning about social justice and political topics at school, I can connect what I have learned and written about at *IndyKids*.

Did you have any interest in journalism or writing before?

I've always enjoyed writing, but I had never tried journalism before. I was mostly doing creative writing until I discovered *IndyKids*.

Do you read a lot? Who's your favorite author?

I read often, and it helps me improve my writing.

I have read a lot of books on the Holocaust, including *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Anne Frank), and John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*. Some of my other favorite authors are R.J. Palacio (*Wonder*), Rebecca Stead (*Goodbye Stranger*) and Veronica Roth (*Divergent*).

Do you have any hobbies?

A few of my hobbies include writing, swimming, playing basketball and watching the TV series *Friends*.

Of the articles you've written for *IndyKids*, which one's your favorite? Why?

My favorite article that I have written was a cover article about Islamophobia. I really enjoyed writing this because it is a subject that I didn't know a lot about, yet it was very interesting and timely. I learned many new facts about real-world challenges, and I got to interview a young Muslim activist about her own experience and work, which I found very exciting.

Someday, you could be a Writer and Educator, like Renée Watson

By DYLAN TRAN, age 12

Renée Watson is a writer and educator based in Harlem, NY. Her award-winning books, which include *This Side of Home* and *Harlem's Little Black Bird: The Story of Florence Mills*, shine a light on the stories of women of color. Her most recent project is I, Too, Art Collective, which aims to preserve Langston Hughes's home in Harlem and transform it into an art center.

Dylan Tran: What inspired you to become a writer?

Renée Watson: As a child I learned that words have power. I was very young when I started writing poems, and sometimes I would give them to family and friends as gifts. They were so moved, and I realized that I had a gift, and I wanted to move people with my words.

What kinds of stories do you try to tell through your writing?

I write young adult and middle-grade novels, as well as picture books. Most of my stories center around African-American girls. I feel responsible for making sure that there is a balance of bitter and sweet, that stereotypes are challenged and that the communities I write about reflect the vibrant, loving and complicated worlds of the real black girls I know.

What do you use as inspiration for your stories?

I get inspiration from current events, unsung heroes, eavesdropping on conversations when I'm on the subway in New York, people-watching at a park. Most times, I get a piece of dialogue first—the character says something really shocking or sad—and I go from there.

How is your work as a writer connected to the creation of I, Too, Arts Collective?

Shortly after moving to New York, I began writing *This Side of Home*, a young adult novel with gentrification as one of its themes. The character, Maya, searches for the black history that she feels has been erased, and is determined to hold on to the past and embrace the new. I kept thinking, this is more than a story for me.

I grew up reading and writing poetry, and I used to teach poetry to young people. I believe strongly that all young people should have access to quality arts education, and that's one of the reasons why I launched I, Too, Arts Collective.

How does social justice play a role in your work?

I believe stories have power—who tells them, how they're told, who the villains are, who the heroes are. All of this plays a part in how stereo-



PHOTO COURTESY RENÉE WATSON

types are formed and reinforced. I hope my work dismantles stereotypes and provides both windows and mirrors for young readers.

Do you have any advice for kids that want to become writers and/or educators?

My advice is to read. Read to enjoy the story, and then read it again to study what the writer did in terms of craft that pulled you in. Reading also builds critical thinking skills and helps you think outside of yourself.

Besides that, my advice is to choose your friends wisely. You're going to need people around you who also have big dreams, and you'll need to lean on each other.

How Did Youth Experience China's Cultural Revolution?



By ELEANOR HEDGES DUROY, age 13

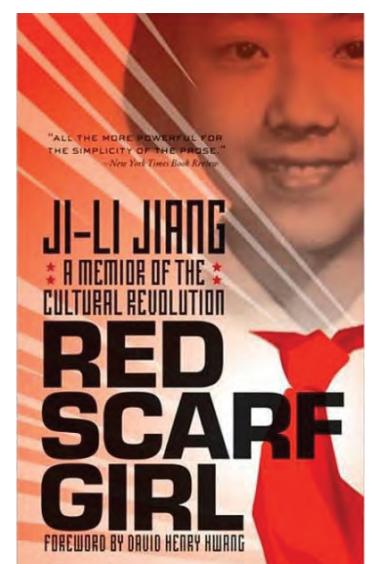
Red Scarf Girl by Ji-Li Jiang is a memoir that takes place during the Cultural Revolution in China. It is 1966, and the changes in China are difficult for everyone. Ji-Li is a scholarly 12-year-old girl who lives with her parents, grandmother and two siblings. Chairman Mao, the leader of China, begins a program to reform Chinese customs and cultures. He tasks teenage Red Guards to find and destroy "The Four Olds"—old customs, habits, cultures and ideas.

Ji-Li, whose family has "bad status" because her grandfather was a landlord, is prevented from joining school organizations, defamed by peers and the Red Guard kidnaps her father. Students are no longer taught history, literature or anything deemed "Western." Ji-Li

battles personal conflicts as neighbors are harassed by the Red Guard and her own family is split apart.

Many of Ji-Li's dreams are put on hold as the Red Guard wreak havoc on citizens: "Everyone could identify the sounds of a search, and we had grown experts at locating them in the neighborhood.... the adults I knew grew more and more tense." The neighborhood is engulfed in fear; life becomes unstable and unpredictable.

Red Scarf Girl helped me understand the enormous impact of the Cultural Revolution on everyone in China and how those changes still affect people today. Read this book if you are interested in reading about political turmoil and how it affects teenager's lives.



Red Scarf Girl, first published in 1998 by HarperCollins, is a historical memoir by Ji-Li Jiang about her childhood during the Cultural Revolution in China.



WARM UP WITH HOT CHOCOLATE

By SAUL FERHOLT-KAHN, age 11

As winter comes, and we are hungry, we want to eat and drink warm things. Hot chocolate is one solution. Hot chocolate began as a drink made by Mayans, originally served cold, spicy and frothy, made with a paste of ground cacao seeds and then mixed with cornmeal, water, chili peppers and more!

As hot cacao spread to Europe, it was drunk only by the upper class as it had to be imported from America. Now, people of all classes can drink hot chocolate to warm themselves and satisfy their hunger.

Ingredients for one serving. If you would like, you can multiply this for more servings::

- 8 ounces of milk (add non-dairy almond or soy milk to make it vegan)
- 1.5 tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa
- 2 teaspoons of sugar, or however much tastes delicious to you
- To make hot chocolate taste even better, add mini-marshmallows. You can also put in a pinch of salt, some spice, a little bit of vanilla extract (added at the last moment), some mint, some honey—whatever suits you!

Steps:

- Heat the milk in a saucepan.
- Set out a cup with the cocoa. Be sure that it has room for milk.
- Pour a few tablespoons (per serving) of the warm milk from the saucepan into the cup with the cocoa.
- Add the cocoa-milk mixture from the cup into the rest of milk in the saucepan. Also add in some of the sugar, so the hot chocolate is sweet, and also any spices, marshmallows, vanilla extract, mint, honey, and/or whatever you like to make you hot cocoa unique!
- Stir occasionally and don't overheat it.
- Pour into a cup and enjoy!



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GARY MARTIN

Now more than ever, we need sources of media for our youth that center the stories of people of color, immigrants, women, workers, and LGBTQ communities. *IndyKids* is the nation's only social justice-oriented newspaper written by kids for kids. Now in its 11th year in print, *IndyKids* is distributed to classrooms and households in 35 states, helping thousands of youth think more critically about the news of the world. Plus, it's free and ad-free!

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GETTING WILD WITH THE KOMODO DRAGON



By MIREYNNA HERNANDEZ, age 10

The komodo dragon, *Varanus komodoensis*, is the biggest lizard in the world. It can grow up to 10 feet in length and weighs more than 300 pounds (160 kilograms). The komodo dragon can live to be about 30 years old. Sadly, these majestic beasts are endangered because of natural disasters like large fires, a scarcity of egg-laying females and poaching. Komodos were hunted because they were thought of as trophies and sold to zoos and private collectors.

Did you know?

- Komodo dragon saliva contains more than 50 different strains of bacteria, allowing komodos to infect and kill their prey with every bite.
- Komodo dragons can make a den that will keep them warm during the night and cool during the day.
- Komodo dragons can eat many different reptiles and mammals, including humans.
- Female komodo dragons can have virgin births. This means they do not need a mate in order to lay eggs.
- When they hatch, baby komodo dragons can climb trees to escape predators such as other komodo dragons and even their own mothers.



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WHO AM I?

By MIREYNNA HERNANDEZ, age 10



1. I was born on May 1, 1919 in Kansas City, Kansas, as the son of a rich attorney.
2. I was sent to Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Missouri. I really didn't like it, but I still completed my first two years of college there.
3. I started to believe in pacifism while studying at Stanford in 1937.
4. Because I refused to fight in World War II, I worked in the Civilian Public Service as a conscientious objector.
5. After working as a Washington D.C. correspondent and newsman, I resigned from my reporting job because I did not want to lie about facts. I moved to Berkeley, California in 1945.
6. I had an idea for a listener-sponsored radio station that did not need the financial support of any government or corporation. Many people did not believe it was possible, but some agreed with my idea.
7. In 1949, I co-founded KPFA, a talk radio and music radio station located in Berkeley, California. KPFA's goal is to promote cultural diversity and freedom of the press while having an independent funding source.
8. I wanted to support the radio station, KPFA, so I created the Pacifica Foundation. Pacifica Foundation is the world's oldest listener-supported radio network.
9. Because I believed in freedom of speech, I welcomed people who were against the Korean War to speak on KPFA during the McCarthy era.
10. I died in 1957 while still the head of the Pacifica Foundation.

Pacifism: The opposition to war, militarism or violence.

Conscientious objector: A person who refuses to serve in the military.

ANSWER: Lewiss Hill



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